

GUIDE

A Publication of the Paulist Fathers

CHANGING CLIMATE IN CONVERT WORK

Conclusions of an Information Center director who has personally helped over 5,000 non-Catholic inquirers.

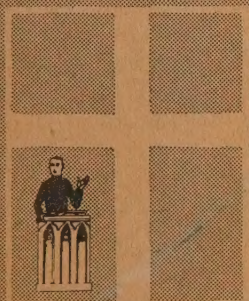
Rev. Kevin A. Lynch, C.S.P.

HOW TO PRESENT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE TO NON-CATHOLICS

Co-author of the highly successful new Catechism for adults, *Life in Christ*, speaks his mind.

Rev. James J. Killgallon

FEBRUARY 1960, No. 145



RT. REV. MSGR.
JOSEPH J. MULLEN, STD
1227 ANSEL RD.
CLEVELAND 8, OHIO



IT SEEMS TO ME

For the Better

One of the healthiest aspects of American Catholicism today is our growing willingness to undertake constructive self-criticism. There is scarcely an apostolate that has escaped realistic scrutiny in order to clarify its goals, to deepen its grasp of underlying principles and to improve its techniques.

What about the Apostolate to non-Catholics? Here too there is increasing evidence that priests are concerned to take a searching look at our efforts to win Christ's "other sheep." And while there are differences of opinion here as elsewhere, there is a growing willingness to admit deficiencies and to effect improvements.

Within the past 18 months, two national conferences on convert work have been held at Washington and a convention of four hundred priests will be held in May of 1960 in Chicago. In that period, at least ten dioceses have sponsored seminars or workshops for priests on winning converts. And a most significant development is the growth of convert study clubs in our seminaries.

In response to many requests for basic topics for discussion and available source material in back issues of GUIDE, the following suggestions are offered. (Numbers indicate individual issues on each topic.)

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JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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Changing Climate in Convert Work

By Reverend Kevin A. Lynch, C.S.P.

The convert apostolate is undergoing significant changes. This has been especially noticeable since the end of World War II. New attitudes on the part of inquirers into the Catholic Faith have brought new responses and approaches by the Church. In this article we interview Father James Lloyd, Director of the Paulist Information Center in New York City, the first Catholic Information Center in the United States. He has had eleven years' active experience in the challenging work of sharing the Faith.

Is there "anything different" in convert work in America today, Father Lloyd?

From my experience dealing with approximately 5,000 inquirers I would answer your question this way: the main thing about today's inquirer is that he is looking for holiness. The old inquirer was searching more for certitude. He was often a doubter to whom lengthy proofs had to be given. The modern inquirer is often quite convinced he should be a Catholic by the time he comes to us. It is much simpler to guide him to certitude.

Take, for example, a man I instructed recently. He said to me at the beginning, "I know all about the Church, Father. I've been married to a wonderful Catholic woman for twenty years. She made me want to be a Catholic." Most younger priests involved in the work agree that the search for holiness is the predominant trait of today's inquirer.

Are there no doubters left then?

We must make a distinction here. I would

say well over half the people coming to the Center today are convinced when they walk through the door. They have the gift of Faith. They believe. Remember now that I am generalizing, which is always risky. Each of these inquirers has his own individual problems and approaches. But their outlook does have the common note of readiness to be taught. However, there is still a large group that provides sincere, intelligent, articulate opposition. I have under instruction now a young Jewish engineer. He takes nothing for granted. If I say something, he wants to know why. This young man hopes to marry a Catholic girl and is studying the Faith. Somehow I think he is going to find it. He is just that good and sincere.

What is the main difficulty of this skeptical inquirer?

He cannot believe in the supernatural world. Spiritual reality is for him an impossibility. Materialistic, atheistic or agnostic, he assents only to what can be verified by sense experience. If he can measure it, he believes it. For these people God, the soul, grace, and after-life are simply non-existent.

How do you deal with this kind of unbelief?

Well, I give the traditional proofs for the existence of God and the soul. But I find two other things more effective. First, you must make them understand revelation. You have to show them God has spoken to men in order to help us to know truths we could never have discovered ourselves. In other words you have to explain the relation between reason and Faith. Even more important you have to relate religion to

their personal lives. With a skeptic you first have to capture his heart before you can work on his head.

Do these skeptics and materialists have any other problems?

Most of them bridle at the authority of the Church. One night several years ago, a man came in armed with Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. We went round and round. When I finally convinced him that Blanshard had torn a number of things out of context and distorted historical situations, he began to listen. After taking the course of instruction three times, he came into the Church. For most of these people democracy as a way of life has shaded their thinking about religion and morality. They feel these should be subject to a majority vote. Lots of time has to be spent explaining the true nature of personal freedom to them.

How do you go about explaining this relationship between freedom and religion?

Well, take the case of the girl who came in this past week. She said a typically modern thing: that she is fulfilled as a person when she makes her own decisions and works out right and wrong for herself. She wanted no Church over her. I think the key here is to make her see the relationship between truth and freedom. Our Lord said, "Know the truth and the truth shall make you free." It is ignorance and error that take away a man's freedom.

What is it, then, that causes this modern, skeptical unbeliever to inquire into the Church?

Well, for those who come on their own (not in preparation for a mixed marriage) I think it is usually because of some crisis or trial. Through a personal experience they come to see the bankruptcy of their own way of life. Recently I instructed a brilliant young inquirer who illustrates my point. What brought him to me was the tragic death of his child. Here was a man who had wealth, distinction and prestige. But he had no belief in God and the supernatural. Yet suddenly God's grace touched him through the death of his child. As the inquirer said very simply, "Father, I want to be with my little boy in heaven some day." For this reason religion must be re-

lated to the personal life of the inquirer—his hopes, fears, joys and frustrations.

Are there any other reasons why these skeptics inquire?

Yes. Secretly I think they admire the holiness and joy they see in certain Catholics. Few would admit this. But it becomes evident from their talk. It is clear, too, from the ardor with which they embrace Catholicism when convinced. In this they are the same as the majority of modern inquirers who frankly admit their quest for holiness.

Many people think a conversion based on a crisis is a purely emotional thing. They therefore conclude most converts to the Church today are emotionally disturbed. Is this true?

Absolutely not. Occasionally there is a disturbed person. But the vast majority are completely normal, well-adjusted individuals. All they want is a deeper knowledge of and union with God. They see the Church can give them this. I do observe, however, that a large number of these people have been hurt. By this I do not mean a shattering psychological experience. Rather sin, sorrow or dissatisfaction with what their parents gave them for a way of life has emptied them of joy and purpose in life. They see that the Faith can bind these wounds.

Do you find ready acceptance for the Church's teaching on marriage? I refer specifically to the teaching on divorce and birth control.

Concerning divorce, most inquirers have little trouble accepting it as the teaching of Christ. Of course, if they are divorced and remarried that creates another problem. But it is relatively easy to convince them of the social and domestic evils of divorce. Most people want to be happily and permanently married. But with birth control you have trouble. I would say simply this: unless an inquirer accepts the teaching authority of the Church, sees her as a Mother guiding her children, then he will reluctantly accept this teaching and probably not abide by it. When a Catholic conscience has been formed through acceptance of the Church as Christ's living voice, there is no trouble at all convincing the inquirer of the evil of birth control.

Reports indicate there are more converts from certain racial groups in recent years. Is this true?

Yes. As an example, the figures for 1958 reveal over 12,000 Negroes were received into the Church. Most of them live in the large cities of the North.

What attracts Negroes to the Church?

The same things that attract other people. Negroes are a naturally religious people. When they move into these large urban parishes in the North, they see the Church for the first time. Proximity and our friendliness and interest do a lot. Specifically, many of them want their children to go to Catholic schools. This establishes the contact which results in conversion. The percentage of Negroes has been increasing constantly in my classes. Unquestionably this is one of the great missionary fields in the American Church today. They are well disposed if only we will go to them. In my thinking, the Catholic parochial school is the key to the Negro apostolate.

As Director of an Information Center here in New York City you must have some observations on the Jewish apostolate. What would you say about that?

I am intensely interested in this apostolate for personal reasons. My father is a Jew. Perhaps I am biased, but I find Jews wonderful people. They are intelligent, vital, humorous and zealous. When they get the Faith, they make excellent Catholics.

What characterizes their approach to the Church?

When I spoke a few minutes ago of some people losing all concept of the supernatural, I had in mind the modern, unbelieving Jew. Those who have forsaken their Judaic religion—and most of them have—are deeply imbued with materialism. Few of the Jews to whom I talk believe in God. And of course they rebel strongly against the notion of Christ's Divinity. In addition, when a Jew becomes a Catholic, he has to pay a heavy price. He is usually ostracized by his relatives and friends.

Yet, the modern Jew is subject to the same laws as everyone else. The intellectual superiority and materialism in which he places his happiness is not enough. It can wear pretty thin, as many Jewish converts

have testified. In the past four years I have received fifty Jews into the Church here at this Center alone. I think it indicates in its own small way a trend.

So far we have been discussing the new and different approaches of the modern inquirer to the Church. Now I would like to ask you, what are the new methods and approaches the Church is using to respond to these altered circumstances?

Since the inquirer today is looking first for holiness, as I stated earlier, our instruction must be geared to this desire. We have new tools available like the catechism, *Life in Christ*, for such instruction. Whatever the catechism used—and I still find a simpler catechism like *Catechism for Inquirers* or a popular text like *I Believe* very helpful with a large number of inquirers—he must quickly be taught how to be a good Catholic. Above all, this is his want and need.

This means introducing him to the Mass fairly early in the instructions and explaining how he takes part in the Holy Sacrifice. It also means much more emphasis on the doctrine of grace, our union with Christ in the Mystical Body, the Communion of Saints and the life-giving nature of the sacraments.

Are any new means being used to attract inquirers to classes?

Yes, in some places TV and radio spot ads are being used to publicize inquiry classes. I have a Sunday morning TV program here in New York. It has a potential audience of 15 million people. Whenever I begin a new series of instructions, I sneak in a plug for it.

One of the methods found successful in a number of parishes has been to mail a letter of invitation to a non-Catholic spouse of a mixed marriage. Father McLean of the Hartford Diocese gets these names from all the parishes in the area. He keeps his class full this way. I myself mail out 2,000 letters of invitation before each series begins. We always have a full class of fifty to sixty, a percentage that would make any advertiser happy.

Many inquirers are brought in by other converts. A satisfied customer is always your best advertisement.

Do many inquirers come because they are going to marry a Catholic?

A good percentage come for that reason or because they have been married to a Catholic for a number of years. There is, however, a definite trend to independent investigation of the Church in recent years. There are several reasons for this. The growing prestige of the Church, the vindication of her consistent stand on Communism, admiration for Catholic education, and appreciation of the Church's sane position on moral issues.

But most important of all is the greater willingness of Catholics to acknowledge their faith. Known as Catholics, they unconsciously provide an example others want to imitate. I received into the Church recently a rabbi's daughter. Her boss was an excellent Catholic who so impressed her that she decided to look into the Church.

How, then, would you advise a Catholic to act who has a relative or friend he desires to become a Catholic?

First and foremost, do not push! You cannot pressure anyone into the Church. A lot of prayer and a little fasting, a lot of laughter and a little explanation. This is my recipe. But above all no tugging and hauling. If it is to be, it will be with God's grace. Show them in your life the holiness that breeds imitation.

Does the laity have any specialized role to play in this apostolate?

They do now and this role will increase. I have two Legion of Mary groups here at the Center which are of invaluable assistance in my program. One group is on hand to greet inquirers when they enter and talk with them after class. They conduct make-up sessions for those who miss classes and do innumerable other tasks to keep the Center functioning. My second Legion group works on integrating new converts into their home parish set-up.

The most encouraging trend is the use of the lay catechist. This is a technique well known in foreign mission work. The lay catechist fully instructs the catechumen and sponsors him at Baptism.

In some dioceses the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine has special courses to train lay catechists. As the number of converts increase, lay catechists will have to be used if we are going to adequately instruct inquirers.

What other trends do you foresee in the convert apostolate?

The convert apostolate is bound to widen through several new developments in the Church. The first is the diocesan census. More thorough techniques have been devised for counting heads among Catholics in this country. On a specified day or week Catholic men will call on every home in the parishes throughout the diocese. They inquire for the names of Catholics, fallen-aways and interested non-Catholics. The results have been quite spectacular. For instance the five dioceses in Wisconsin ran a joint census a couple of years ago. In that state 18,790 non-Catholics were reported interested in the Church as a result of this census.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine has developed adult religion classes to instruct fallen-aways and inquirers discovered by these census drives.

Another forward movement is the missionary parish. Some parishes are organizing to reach the non-Catholics in their area. This is a long range project, but as more parishes acquire a wider view of their apostolic obligations toward non-Catholics and become more involved in local apostolic concerns, the convert apostolate will increase by leaps and bounds.

In short I would say up until recently the convert apostolate has been more an individual concern of certain priests and laymen. In the future it will be characterized by much more group effort along parish and diocesan lines.

How can the new findings from the social sciences—psychology, social psychology, and sociology—help convert work?

Sociological studies could reveal where converts come from, their social economic, racial and cultural background.

Psychological studies could uncover hidden motives that attract or repel potential converts. We know Madison Avenue uses "hidden persuaders" to sell soap. Why can we not use honorable motivational research to bring people to eternal life?

Studies could also reveal what happens to converts over the years. How many fall away? How many become indifferent, mediocre Catholics? And the reasons.

Such information would be of assistance in attracting and instructing converts more effectively.

How to Present Christian Doctrine to Non-Catholics

By Reverend James J. Killgallon

*Believing
Convincing (debatable)*

The use of the old, post-Tridentine approach in present day practical apologetics has been described as firing at the enemy where he used to be. The description is not inexact. Surely the old method smacks of the military; facts are marshalled like soldiers; proofs are aimed at the target like ammunition at the mind of the unbeliever or the prospective convert—who presumably will be so bowled over by the logic of the arguments that he will be convinced.

REMAINS UNCONVINCED

3 Reasons in Latin

Among the many disadvantages inherent in this method is a very obvious one: it doesn't work. If the target is a prospective convert he doesn't need to be bowled over. If he is an unbeliever who doesn't want to be convinced, no amount of logical arguments will convince him. The more proofs you present to him, the more he will cling stubbornly to his old prejudices and opinions, feeling that things can't possibly be that black and white, that cut and dried, that there must be flaws in the arguments which he cannot see.

Herein lies one of the great weaknesses of the method—it ignores human psychology; it assumes that a stark and logical presentation of truth will be convincing. It makes no attempt to appeal to the whole man. It makes no effort to attract, only to compel. It does not aim to show that *this*

is beautiful (and also, happily, true), that *this* corresponds to one's longings and needs. It merely announces that *this* is true, and assumes that if you are a logical and sensible man, free of prejudice, you will accept it. How foolish that is. There are logical and sensible men, of course, but is there a man who is completely free of prejudice, present company included?

In our day advertising has become, if not an art, something approaching an exact science. The seller of the product has studied the habits, the background, the likes, and dislikes, and the needs of his potential customer. He relies heavily on psychology in mapping out his advertising campaign. Without intending to compare the teaching of religion to the sale of a product (indeed, the very expression, although often used in a well-meaning way, is in itself offensive); might we not say that in presenting the great truths which God has entrusted to us, we ought to take as much care as business men do in presenting their product to the public? At least ought we not know the person to whom we are talking and understand, if we can, what are his special needs?

BIBLE PROTESTANTS

The post-Tridentine approach is directed to Protestants, to people who have been raised in an atmosphere in which the Bible was held to be the only source of revelation and all the externals of the Church were denied. In this climate there was great disapproval of the idea of Purgatory, Indulgences, statues and images, devotion to the

saints, and all the other things which had been attacked by the early Protestants. There are, unquestionably, many places today in which this old rock-ribbed Protestantism still survives. In the United States many rural areas especially in the South are cases in point.

DIFFERENT ATTITUDE

But there are also, unquestionably, many, many Protestants today who do not have the mentality of the old-timers. At least in the large northern cities of the United States, Protestants by and large do not have strong feelings about Purgatory or prayers for the dead. Some are apt to join in the prayers at a Catholic wake and even to request a Mass for the repose of the soul of a Catholic friend. Many carry St. Christopher medals in their automobiles. This is not to say that the average Protestant does not have his prejudices or at least false ideas about the Church. It is to say, however, that nowadays many Protestants have a different sort of feeling about the Church, different objections.

There are, of course, many kinds of Protestants. There are those who have been baptized and who are affiliated with a particular Protestant church, whose teachings they accept. Practising Lutherans are a good example of such Protestants.

There are those who, while affiliated with a certain church, regard the question of belief as a purely personal matter. Often these people belong to an undenominational church.

There are those, too, who do not belong to any church or sect, but nevertheless read and accept the Bible, interpreting it, of course, in their own way.

Then there are those who really have no religion, i.e., they have had no instruction whatever in the Bible or in any religious doctrine; they have never been baptized in any sect, never go to any church, probably have never learned any prayers. They believe in the Supreme Being, but have very little knowledge of Him. Yet, oddly enough, they are usually considered to be Protestants simply because they are not either Catholics or Jews.

In the United States (as Will Herberg, who has made many studies in religious sociology, has pointed out) you are either Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. You might

become a Brahmin or a Buddhist, but unless you have dark skin or yellow skin, no one will take you seriously as such. Consequently there is a vast number of people who really have no religion—certainly not a Christian one—who are regarded as, and who in many cases regard themselves as, Protestants.

With so many different kinds and degrees of Protestants, can it be said that there is such a thing as a Protestant mentality, a Protestant view of religion, a Protestant picture of the Catholic Church? To a certain extent I think there can. Protestantism is not merely a group of sects or denominations; it is a state of mind, a religious viewpoint, and it has produced a culture which reflects that viewpoint.

The United States is a Protestant country. Regardless of the size and apparent influence of the Catholic Church (and would that its influence were as great, if not as pernicious, as many Protestants think) the United States is a Protestant country. This does not mean that most of the people in the country belong to a Protestant Church. They do not. It does mean that the culture and the prevailing viewpoint is Protestant. Even Catholics are affected by this viewpoint. Only the really fervent ones have not been so affected.

PROTESTANT VIEWPOINT

This Protestant viewpoint is characterized by

(A) an emphasis on the subjective, personal, individual aspect of religion, an insistence on the right of the individual to decide for himself what to believe and how to worship;

(B) an emotional rather than an intellectual approach to faith and morality;

(C) an oversimplified, sentimental moral system, which comes down often to the Golden Rule, and not infrequently to "the end justifies the means," or to an acceptance of common practice as the norm of morality. This does not mean, of course, that Protestants whose Church teaches doctrine and moral principles actually believe that the end justifies the means, any more than good Catholics do. But this is the prevailing viewpoint, I believe. This observation, admittedly, is not based on any scientific survey. But it is based on twenty years of experience in parish work, a large

*Perhaps the majority of non-Catholics fear
the Catholic Church and resent its authority.*

part of which has been in convert work, including talks to Protestant groups, talks which were followed by long, and to the speaker, illuminating question periods.

IMAGE OF THE CHURCH

Can one say that there is a Protestant image of the Church, or more exactly, a non-Catholic image of the Church? Here religious surveys do come to our aid. Many have been made, and one fact always emerges. Non-Catholics in the United States are impressed by the size and the authority of the Catholic Church. Some are impressed favorably; Americans admire bigness, most people respect authority, many non-Catholics actually wish that their own Church would speak with more authority.

Others, probably the majority, are unfavorably impressed. They fear that the Church, already so large and powerful, will interfere with their liberty, even to the point of denying them religious freedom if she is ever in a position to do so. They also resent the Church's authority. "What right," they say, "has any Church to tell a man what he has to believe and what he may or may not do?"

Then, too, apart from a reaction to the size and the authority of the Church, there must be in the minds of non-Catholics a bewilderment about what Catholics believe and what they do, especially in their worship. Some are merely puzzled, but not interested enough to care one way or the other. Some are downright contemptuous and look upon Catholics as superstitious and ignorant. These would have nothing to do with the Church or her ritual; they are held off by a strong prejudice. (Yet some of the very best converts have admitted that they once belonged to this group.) But there are others (and who knows how many?) who feel that they would like to know more about what Catholics believe and why they act as they do; others who are vaguely attracted to the ritual of the Church, but feel, pathetically enough, that it is simply over their heads, something you have to be born into.

Clare Boothe Luce once remarked that the Church is like a stained-glass window—it can be seen and appreciated only from the inside. How does it look from the outside? It is difficult for "born Catholics" to imagine, but the attempt to do so would be salutary for us and for others. It must look like a huge jumble of odd and rather frightening things—priests in funny clothes, nuns in funnier clothes, all of them unmarried, vigil lights, confessionals (where God knows what goes on), strange, secret rites in which everything is said in Latin. It must look like a secret society, too. No one will ever tell you anything. Ask a Catholic a simple question and he immediately is on his guard. "You'd better ask a priest," he says, knowing full well that you'd never dare approach one of those mysterious and frightening figures in black.

Many Catholics do not help the situation, either, considering the way they express themselves. Why is birth-control wrong? The Church says so. Why is divorce and remarriage forbidden? The Church says so. Why do you have to go to Mass on Sundays? The Church says so. Yes, but why does the Church say so? I don't know, but if the Church says so—it's so.

NEED WHOLE PICTURE

We Catholics, fully aware of the divine authority of the Church, realize that when the Church speaks Christ speaks. But non-Catholics do not know this. Do they even know that we believe it? They must think that we give our love and allegiance not to God, but to an institution which somehow in the course of centuries "got between" the individual and God. They cannot understand why we insist on going to God through the Church. To them it seems so much more simple and satisfactory to go to God, to Christ directly. They cannot understand why we have to confess our sins to a priest instead of simply to God. Tell them that Christ insisted that we must. Prove it from John 20, 21-23, and he will still be unconvinced unless he sees the whole picture.

That, I submit, is what the modern non-Catholic needs to be presented with—the

whole picture. So much time has been wasted on trying to answer individual objections. What the unbeliever does not understand is not merely this or that particular point—confession, devotion to Mary, the immorality of contraception. It is the Church itself that he does not understand. It is the whole economy of salvation, the whole wonderful story of God's love and our redemption. He may think he has heard the good news of our redemption, but he has heard only a part of it. The whole glorious truth he knows only in a caricaturized version.

ATTRACT BY BEAUTY

Isn't it our mission to give to the world the glad tidings as Christ gave it to the Apostles and the Apostles to the world? Surely we must teach about indulgences and the veneration of images—but later, when our hearers already want this beautiful thing to be true and will be prepared to listen to everything with an open mind.

Why not present the doctrines we believe in a way which will attract by their beauty rather than merely impress by their logic. *with?* Why not start with the simple truth that God is love, then to tell how God in his love *will?* willed to share His life with us, adopting us as His own sons and daughters, how He sent His own Son to restore that life to us by gathering us together, uniting us to Himself and to one another in a new body, His Mystical Body, the Church. Why not explain the marks and attributes of the Church by telling the whole beautiful mystery, that Christ sent the Holy Spirit to dwell deep in His Mystical Body, to keep it one, to keep it holy, to keep it from error. The beauty of these great realities is such that it attracts the person to whom they are shown, rather than puts him on his guard. Proofs can come afterwards, when the mind is ready for them.

Christian morality, viewed from the outside, can appear to be a stern, rigid, joyless thing. It has been parodied in this way by some sects. Why not explain it as it really is? God our Father loves us so much that He wants our happiness—in heaven but also in this life. He has made all the things in this world, and all of them are good. He has been good enough to tell us how to use them so that we will not spoil our happiness. The animals have instincts to protect them;

we have the commandments. Why not tell the simple truth that the only commandment, really, is the commandment to love, to love God and our neighbor? The ten commandments not only make sense, they become beautiful and attractive, when they are seen as a particularization of the law of love. Sin, which the world treats so lightly, is seen for what it really is when it is presented as ingratitude to our loving Father, mortal sin as a cutting off of oneself from God, a refusal to love God. It is only in this context that the doctrine of hell makes sense.

For all their errors the Protestants did preserve some precious things, among them a great reverence for and reliance on the Scriptures, a tradition of community song and of participation of the congregation in worship. One of the most difficult things for some converts to take is the stony silence which prevails in some Catholic churches during Mass. Another is the attitude of many Catholics regarding the Holy Scripture: "We have the Church; we don't need to read the Bible."

KERYGMATIC METHOD

Why don't we show Protestants how the Church treasures the Scriptures, show them not only by arguments but by basing our very teaching on the Scriptures, letting not only the voices of theologians speak but also the inspired word of God. And why not let it speak not only in proof but also in exposition of doctrine. Why not let outsiders see the marvelous riches which we have in our liturgy, let them see that we come together not to go through a lot of meaningless ritual, but to offer supreme worship to our Father through Christ. Why not show them how we can participate actively in worship instead of merely saying, "Once the people said this, once they sang this. Today, however, they don't."

All this adds up, of course, to the Kerygmatic method of teaching and instructing. What more natural, more beautiful, more effective approach is there in teaching our own children, our own people? What more appealing and effective approach to non-Catholics, to sincere Protestants? And, if anything is going to be effective with the old-time, rock-ribbed Protestant, it will not be the post-Tridentine method; it will be the Kerygmatic.

Guide Lights

How do U. S. Catholics look to those outside the Church? What are the chief Protestant and Jewish fears about Catholics, and their principal complaints?

A new book published here by Sheed and Ward attempts to give some of the answers. Entitled "*American Catholics: A Protestant-Jewish View*," it contains essays in which three Protestant and three Jewish leaders give their opinions of various aspects of Catholicism.

Two of the themes sounded most frequently by the contributors are mistrust and growing Catholic "power" and the complaint that Catholics do not enter freely enough into "dialogue" with persons of other religions.

EPISCOPALIAN . . .

Stringfellow Barr, an Episcopalian who is professor of humanities at Rutgers University, writes that the U. S. Catholic must watch most carefully his use of the worldly power which his Church's increasing numbers have given it and which its increasing wealth is likely to give it in even larger measure." Among U. S. non-Catholics, he says, the Church has a reputation of "getting its way politically by wire-pulling and fast footwork by covert pressures and invisible influence.

"It is simply a brutal fact that American non-Catholics are afraid of the Catholic Church, and its behavior in certain other countries has not reassured them," he adds. Fear is a bad basis for good communication, and breeds a kind of cold war."

LUTHERAN . . .

The Rev. Martin E. Marty, a Lutheran minister who is associate editor of the *Christian Century*, Protestant weekly published in Chicago, declares that the "comprehensiveness, solidarity, and organizational unity" of U. S. Catholics have given them quasimajority status in a land of weak and divided Protestant loyalties." Arguing that "dialogue" between U. S. Catholics and non-Catholics is essential, Dr. Marty says that his dialogue should be "specifically theological," as it has been for some years in Protestant-Catholic discussions in Germany.

He states: "When discussion in seminars comes near to vital points, comes tantalizingly close to significance, it is frustrating to be told that the Catholics present are not there to discuss theology. . . . Were I to state a Protestant 'dream' . . . it would be . . . the invitation from a Roman Catholic bishop for such sanctioned exchange."

PRESBYTERIAN . . .

The Rev. Robert McAfee Brown, Presbyterian minister and editor of the magazine *Christianity and Crisis*, lists four basic "concerns" of U. S. Protestants in regard to the Church:

(1) "What if Catholicism became the dominant force in American life? Would Protestants still be as free to worship and evangelize as they are now? Could they continue to read and discuss what they wanted to? Could they act as missionaries of the Word wherever they felt called upon to go? Or would the Catholic majority deny them these rights?"

(2) "The notion that Catholicism is a kind of monolithic structure. . . . This image of the Church suggests that the hierarchy has a uniform opinion on absolutely everything and that the laity believe and do whatever the hierarchy tells them to believe and do about absolutely everything."

(3) The problem of apparently conflicting statements on such topics as Church-State relations and the rights of conscience given by "liberal" and "conservative" Catholic spokesmen. Protestants are confused as to "who really speaks for Catholicism."

(4) Attempts by Catholics "to enforce Catholic morality on non-Catholics," for example, by making it illegal for non-Catholic doctors to distribute birth control information to non-Catholic patients.

Relations between Catholics and non-Catholics could improve if Catholics would clarify further their stand on Church-State relations, the Rev. Brown says.

LAYMAN . . .

Arthur A. Cohen, a Jew who is president of Meridian Books Publishing Company, declares that, in the belief that anti-Semitism is widespread among Catholics, Jews "are,

by and large, suspicious—if not openly hostile—toward the Catholic Church.” Among “natural Jews”—those “divested of supernatural motive and intention”—there is mistrust of the Church specifically because it does not use its supposed “power” on behalf of the liberal causes they support, Mr. Cohen writes.

On the other hand, “supernatural Jews”—those with theological beliefs and commitments—believe that Judaism and Christianity are “utterly different” and that the so-called “Judaean-Christian heritage” is a “myth,” he adds.

RABBI . . .

Rabbi Arthur Gilbert, director of the inter-religious co-operation department of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, echoes the complaint that the Church has not used its “immense potential power” on behalf of liberal social causes. Rabbi Gilbert says also that many Jews are offended by the way their race is depicted in Catholic communications media and school textbooks. For this and other reasons, “many Jews tend to trust the Protestant, but they are quite convinced that parochial schools are seed bed . . . for anti-Jewish attitudes,” he says.

The Rabbi states also that “the Roman Catholic priesthood remains the most inaccessible group of Christian clergy in the United States.” This has helped make the Church “forbidding” to many Jews, he says.

NCCJ . . .

Dr. Allyn P. Robinson, director of the greater New York area of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, urges Catholic bishops to be “more unequivocal” in their statements on religious liberty. “There is no single move that the American hierarchy could make that would do more to lessen the tensions that exist between Catholics and non-Catholics in America than an unequivocal statement on religious liberty,” he writes.

Dr. Robinson says the U. S. Catholic clergy has “by and large stayed out” of the inter-religious dialogue in this country.

“Too frequently any real interchange even on a civic level is left to the Jesuits or to secular priests who carry special assignments in such groups as the National Catholic Welfare Conference,” he states.

“There are some notable and rather wonderful exceptions, but the ‘great dialogue’ has involved the hierarchy almost not at all and the leading Catholic clergy of many of the larger dioceses have been noticeably absent.”

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AFTERWORD . . .

In a “Catholic Postscript” to the book, Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., a faculty member at Woodstock (Md.) College, comments that “the men who contribute to this volume have not written to be refuted.”

“They may indeed err in their evaluation of American Catholic reality, but this is not a controversy or a debate,” he says. “We have humbly asked them to state what they see in us, and in kindly fashion they have granted us our petition. To become angry with them because they do us the favor we ourselves have begged is hardly the reaction consistent with our prayer.”

Father Weigel writes: “We do not at all want to drop the characteristic marks of our Faith, but there is no need to hang on to modal quirks and kinks which might make us stand out as an unpleasant people. . . .

“We can correct our behavior, and the result will be a more effective life for us and for those with whom we live. Even from the religious viewpoint, such correction is called for. If we wish to give effective witness to the Faith which is in us, we must learn to communicate smoothly. Otherwise our witness will be frustrated at the very outset.”

“*American Catholics: A Protestant-Jewish View*” was edited by Philip Scharper of Sheed and Ward. It is priced at \$3.75, with 235 pages.